

Mayor Oscar B. Goodman

City of Las Vegas

He's brutally honest, not afraid to speak his mind and he loves his constituents just as much as they love him. Whatever you say about Las Vegas Mayor Oscar B. Goodman, no one can doubt the love he has for this community and his overwhelming desire to make it even better. When he decided to run for Mayor in 1999, most said he could never win. The local newspaper headline read "Anybody but Oscar" the day after he filed for office. But the residents embraced Goodman's no-nonsense, tell it like it is style, and elected him in a landslide.

He says to anyone who will listen that he's the "Happiest Mayor in the Universe." In April of 2007, Mayor Oscar Goodman captured 84 percent of the vote in his re-election effort to a third 4-year term. The final vote tally is one of the largest margins of victory ever for a large city mayor in a major election. Mayor Goodman often jokes that he's "still looking for the other 16 percent!" Mayor Goodman now serves as the Chairman of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and feverishly works to promote the enticing destination of Las Vegas. Mayor Goodman has also started OPAC, Oscar's Political Action Committee, to promote and protect the interests of Las Vegas. His first action was to donate \$50,000 to the Keep Memory Alive Foundation, the "Think Tank" foundation for the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute.

Mayor Goodman has been responsible for many great accomplishments in the heart of downtown. As Mayor, he was successful in acquiring a large piece of urban real estate in the city without resorting to eminent domain. Symphony Park, a phenomenal 61-acre planned development, will include the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute, designed by renowned architect Frank Gehry, a 350,000 square-foot Performing Arts Center, boutique hotels, multiple high residential units, business, medical, and retail opportunities. Downtown is undergoing a dramatic change, a renaissance. It is evolving into a vibrant place for living, working, and being able to enjoy entertainment and art venues. Bounding Symphony Park are the World Market Center, the Chelsea Properties mall, and an office complex which is LEED certified. The World Market Center is a state-of-the-art home furnishings trade show facility. When completed, the complex will exceed 12 million square feet with 8 buildings. The Chelsea Properties discount mall is the most successful of its kind for dollar per square foot income. A jewelry mart, 50 plus stories in height, is also in the developmental state. In addition, there are almost 18,000 living spaces being planned for construction in the downtown. Also, for the first time in many years, multi-million dollar casino and hotel renovations and expansions are currently underway.

The Mayor's mother, Laura, was a renowned sculptor and had a great influence on the Mayor. Her appreciation for art is reflective of the Mayor's efforts to enhance culture and the arts in Las Vegas. You can currently visit an emerging eclectic mix of live-work artist residences and galleries known as the 18b Arts District. You can always catch the Mayor at an event called *First Friday*, which the Mayor describes as "a sense of place in an artistic environment." Thousands of people now flock downtown to this once a month event. It's known as a huge block party for art perusal and appreciation. Mayor Goodman also managed to acquire a beautifully historic downtown post office from the General Service Administration, which he plans to refurbish as a museum of Las Vegas, showcasing his city's colorful history. Fremont East Entertainment District continues the synergy of downtown featuring trendy new gathering places for dining, dancing, cocktails and enjoyment. An intellectual market place is being designed in a historical Spanish styled elementary school and will be home to the University of Nevada Las Vegas' School of Architecture, UNLV Modern Letters Program and the Nevada School of the Arts.

Goodman has always been a downtown kind of guy. Born and raised in Philadelphia, he graduated from Haverford College and received his law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He and his wife of 46 years, Carolyn, who was a Manhattanite and alumna of Bryn Mawr College, have been married since 1962 and moved to Las Vegas two years later "with \$87 in our pockets," he's fond of saying. They grew up with the town, utilizing their great educations and establishing an extremely successful law practice. He made a name for himself by taking on some of the toughest cases and winning them, as told in the recent publication of John L. Smith's biography "Of Rats and Men." Goodman is now representing the City with the same fervor he brought to every case he tried as a criminal defense attorney. For his legal work, the National Law Journal has recognized him as one of the "15 Best Trial Lawyers in America." Because of his unique client list, his exploits were the subject of a British documentary titled, "Mob Law." He also played himself in the movie "Casino." Carolyn is the founder and President of the first non-profit, non-sectarian private school in Nevada, The Meadows.

The Mayor also has a few personal reasons for wanting to keep Las Vegas strong. Carolyn and he have four grown children, all of whom have acquired college degrees and graduate degrees in law, medicine and human resources, with all now calling Las Vegas their home. He wants for them the same thing he wants for every resident -- the ability to make your dreams come true. "When Carolyn and I came here, Las Vegas was truly the land of milk and honey," he says. "You could establish a career, make something for yourself, and enjoy a great quality of life. I want to make sure that never changes."

